

# EXHIBIT 41

ROY THOMAS PRESENTS  
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COMICS FANZINE!

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# Alter Ego™

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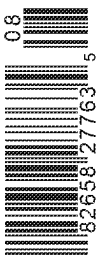
STAN LEE AND  
OTHERS REVEAL  
THE SECRET  
ORIGINS OF  
MARVEL!

RARE JACK  
KIRBY ART  
AND INFO!

I PREFER THE INTERVIEW  
WITH AL SULMAN--  
"PERSONAL ASSOCIATE  
OF STAN LEE!"

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MARVEL!

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**Associate Editors**  
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Jim Amash

**Design & Layout**  
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John Morrow

**FCA Editor**  
P.C. Hamerlinck

**Comic Crypt Editor**  
Michael T. Gilbert

**Editorial Honor Roll**  
Jerry G. Bails (founder)  
Ronn Foss, Biljo White  
Mike Friedrich

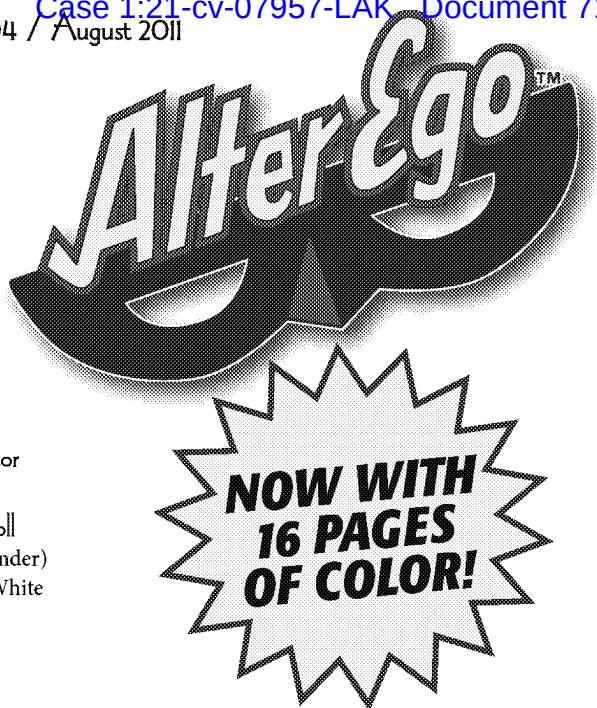
**Proofreader**  
Rob Smentek

**Cover Artists**  
Ron Frenz (pencils) [after Jack Kirby]  
& Joe Sinnott (inks)

**Cover Colorist**  
Tom Ziuko

**With Special Thanks to:**

Roy Ald	Jack & Roz Kirby
Heidi Amash	Estate
Ger Apeldoorn	Henry Kujawa
Dick Ayers	Jim Kuzee
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**On Our Cover:** Our heartfelt thanks to **Ron Frenz** for re-rendering the original **Jack Kirby** cover of 1961's *Fantastic Four #1*, as it might have looked if the quartet had been sporting the costumes they didn't actually don until the third issue—while, to show how it could've looked if it had been inked by **Joe Sinnott**, who is all but universally acclaimed as the best F.F. inker ever, we just had to talk Joltin' Joe himself into doing it! We truly appreciate their Herculean effort—and Joe, in particular, is still bothered by that detached shoulder rotor muscle of a couple of years ago. [Fantastic Four TM & © 2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

**Above:** While a number of fine comics artists have drawn *The Silver Surfer* over the years, both in a mag of his own and elsewhere, the gleaming guardian of the spaceways will forever be identified with **Jack Kirby**, who came up with the hero for *Fantastic Four #48* (March 1966) just so worlds-gulping *Galactus* would have someone to talk to! This dynamic drawing, penciled and possibly inked by Kirby, was utilized as the cover figure on the program book of *Phil Seuling's 1975 New York Comic Art Convention*. Thanks to **John Benson**. [Silver Surfer TM & © 2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



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FIRST PRINTING.

# STAN LEE's Amazing Marvel Interview!

## Two Extraordinary 2005 Audio Sessions With The Man Who Spearheaded Marvel Comics

Additional Text by Roy Thomas • Interview Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

# A/E

**EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION:** To celebrate the 50th anniversary of *The Fantastic Four* #1,

which went on sale circa July/August of 1961 and thereby set in motion what Stan Lee would later tout as "The Marvel Age of Comics," I'm honored to be able to present in print for the first time ever what is probably the longest interview ever given by Stan, the writer/editor who started it all.

So how did I stumble upon this treasure trove?

Sometime in early 2005 I received a phone call from a young man named Conor Risch, an editor for a Seattle-area editorial book-packaging company with the offbeat, uncapitalized, and exclamation-pointed name of becker&mayer! They were about to put together a book centered around my old boss and mentor Stan Lee (with whom I was still working, actually, on the daily-and-Sunday Spider-Man newspaper comic strip). It was to be titled Stan Lee's Amazing Marvel Universe, and would be issued by Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

Becker&mayer!'s personnel had sold Sterling on a concept for an unusual type of book. It would elaborate upon a number of key moments in Stan's career as writer and editor at Marvel. (But—50 moments? 100? The precise number was still up in the air.) It would combine straight text—which Stan had kindly suggested I might be the right person to provide—with accompanying audio tracks to be narrated by Stan himself. Interspersed throughout the 200-page tome would be a series of so-called illustrated "icons." Each time the reader came to one of these icons at a particular spot in the text, he needed only to press the "PLAY" button on the digital audio player (a 2½" x 11" x ¾" mostly-plastic device physically attached to the book), and he/she would hear Stan's voice, relating a sentence or three that would augment the information on that particular page



### Digital Doings

Photo taken on Sept. 5, 2005, at the conclusion of the second recording session held for the book pictured below. From left to right: editor/questioner Jenna Land Free... Marvel fountainhead Stan Lee... longtime Marvel writer & editor Roy Thomas... and audio session director Leigh Gilbert. With thanks to Jenna.

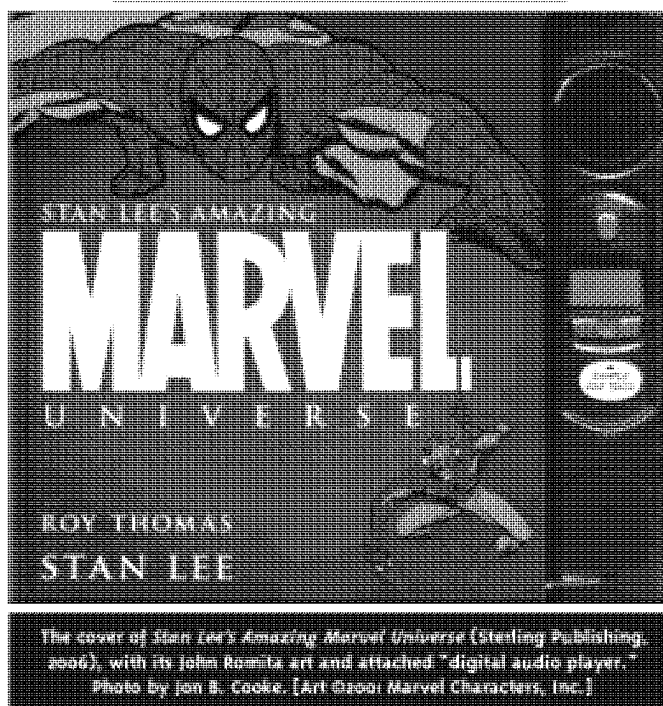
and subject. The project sounded like a fascinating experiment, and I was overjoyed to be involved.

Almost immediately, however, Conor Risch left becker&mayer!, and I was handed over into the consummate care of his colleague Jenna Land Free, who made all subsequent editorial and production decisions on the book (with feedback from her b&m bosses and Sterling, of course). At some point she and I settled on 50 as being the maximum number of "moments" we could handle well in 200 pages, so we began culling an earlier list of around 100 down to half that number. (The finished book would appear in 2006, with image research for becker&mayer! credited to Shayna Ian, design to Todd Bates, audio sound editing—an unusual credit in a book—to Kate Hall, and custom audio engineering—ditto—to Steve Beck. My main contacts via phone and e-mail in 2005, while I wrote the text, were Jenna, Shayna, and Todd.)

But the contents of the book weren't all handled "long distance."

In August, with the writing well under way but with the list not yet totally pared down to the "final 50," Jenna phoned to ask if I could fly from South Carolina to Los Angeles (where Stan has lived for the past three decades) to take part in the first of probably two recording sessions to be done with Stan for the book. Nice as it would be to see Stan again, I was less than eager to hop a plane for an overnight stay in L.A. But Jenna felt I might be useful in jogging Stan's memory concerning some bit of Marvel arcana about which, due to my long-standing interest in comics history, I might remember more than he did—and frankly, I figured she was probably right. So, "California, here I come!"

The recording studio, nestled somewhere in the urban sprawl that is the Los Angeles Basin, was a tidy little building which contained a



The cover of *Stan Lee's Amazing Marvel Universe* (Sterling Publishing, 2006), with its John Romita art and attached "digital audio player." Photo by Jon B. Cooke. [Art ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



rewarded and righteousness always triumphs.

*After Jenna has a brief exchange with the recording engineer:*

A question for the engineer? Am I competing with the engineer? His answers better not be cleverer than mine. [in response to an unrecorded comment from someone:] I like your attitude.

*Stan is asked about the creation of J. Jonah Jameson as a foil for Spider-Man.*

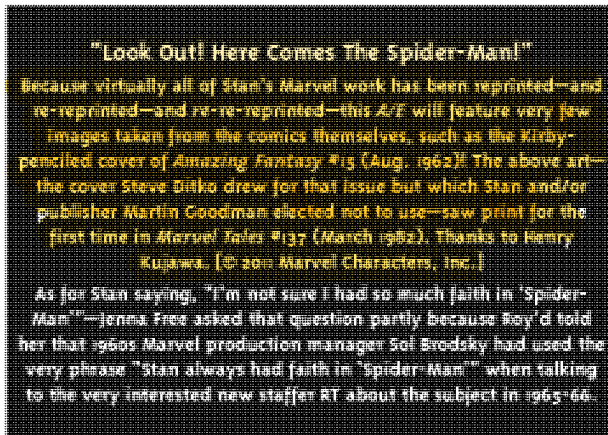
You probably can't tell by listening to me, but I love humor. And I feel that, even in serious stories, the more you inject elements of humor, the more palatable it is and the more you enjoy the story. So, even though "Spider-Man" was the story of a super-hero who's fighting deadly super-villains, I wanted to inject some humor, and I couldn't think of a better way to do it than to have another character that Spider-Man or Peter Parker would be involved with and who would hate Spider-Man. And who would not like Peter Parker that much, either. But poor Peter had to be with this guy, and of course that would be Jonah Jameson, the publisher of *The Daily Bugle*, which was the newspaper that Peter sold photographs to on a freelance basis.

Now, I didn't want to make him like the editor of the paper that Superman was involved in—although I never read "Superman" that much. But I know there was an editor, a publisher, or somebody named Perry White. And as far as I could tell, he was just a regular guy. But I made our J. Jonah Jameson not really a regular guy. I made him irascible, a loudmouth, bigoted, narrow-minded, with a quick temper... everybody that you wouldn't like. And poor Peter was stuck with this guy as his boss. And I don't know if the readers liked it, but I had a lot of fun writing the dialogue between Peter and J. Jonah Jameson.

*Jenna asks Stan why he had so much faith in Spider-Man as a character?*

You know, it's a funny thing... I'm not sure that I had so much faith in "Spider-Man." It was just an idea that I had. And I hate to let an idea go to waste. I wasn't sure it would be a hit. It was just something I wanted to do, mainly because I felt he's different than all the other super-heroes. First of all, he was a teenager and all the others were adults. They had teenage sidekicks, but that was all. And he had all these problems. And he wasn't that handsome. And he wasn't that tall or strong, and I just thought it would be fun to do it. I wasn't certain that it would be successful, but I wanted to try it. I love trying new things.

There's one very interesting thing about Spider-Man's costume that I don't know if everybody is aware of. And it happened, I think, accidentally. When Steve Ditko designed the costume, he covered Peter up totally.



You don't see any skin, any flesh at all, which is unusual. On most other super-hero costumes, you see a bit of the face, or the hands, or something. Well, what happened was, it was a very fortuitous choice of costume, because—and I learned this later; I wasn't aware of it in the beginning—but it happened that any young person of any race could identify with Peter Parker, or rather Spider-Man. Because, for all we knew, under the costume, he could have been black... he could have been Asian... he could have been Indian. He could have been anybody with any skin color. And I think that turned out to be a wonderful thing, and I think it may be one of the reasons that Spider-Man is so popular all over the world.

*"Tell us about Dr. Octopus."*

Hm-hmm... I always loved Dr. Octopus. First of all, as you may have realized by now, I love wacky names. And the big thing with a villain—usually in creating a villain the first thing I would think of was a name, and then I would try to think of, "Well, now that I've got the name, who's the character going to be and what will he do?" For some reason, I thought of an octopus. I thought, "I want to call somebody Octopus. And I want him to have a couple of extra arms just for fun." But I had to figure out how to do that. Well, I worked that out. But then, getting back to the name: Since he was a scientist, I figured, I'll call him Dr. Octopus, which sounded good to me. But again, I kept thinking about it and—oh, incidentally, in order to make it realistic, I called him Dr. Otto Octavius. But because he had these artificial tentacles, I had the people who knew him call him Doc Ock—Dr. Octopus. Just as a nickname. Something that they might in real life call somebody whose name was Octavius, and who looked like that. But then I thought I'd even make it

more of a nickname, and I changed Dr. Octopus to Doc Ock. And I loved Doc Ock. I always think of him as Doc Ock. As you can tell, I really turn on to strange names.

I guess I nickname everybody. For example, Spider-Man himself. I mean, nobody ever called Superman "Supey," as far as I know. But I felt, "Spider-Man, it's a good name. It's dramatic, but it's a little bit stiff." So I began to refer to him as "Spidey." And I think I did that with most of our heroes. I gave almost all of them nicknames which I enjoyed. I had no idea how the readers felt about it, but I was making myself happy when I wrote the stories.

I think it humanizes them. And I think it also makes the reader feel a little friendly toward them. Daredevil I called "Horn-head," and Thor I called "Goldilocks," 'cause he had that long golden hair. I had little names for everybody.



"Why didn't Peter Parker tell the world he now had spider-powers?"

I just felt it was more dramatic for Peter to keep his Spider-Man identity a secret, because if everybody knew he was Spider-Man, I couldn't get as many problems for him in his life, in his personal life. And it just seems to me that the more personal problems a character has, the more interesting he is. So, except for the Fantastic Four, I think just about all or most of our super-hero characters had secret identities.

*Jenna asks for a few words about The Green Goblin.*

The Green Goblin, of course, is another of my favorite villains. In fact, I think *all* of my villains are my favorite villains. But Steve and I—Steve Ditko, the artist, and the co-plotter, I might add—we had a big argument. Now, I'm not sure it was about The Green Goblin. It might have been about someone else, 'cause my memory is terrible—but The Green Goblin will serve as a good example. So let's say it was about The Green Goblin. At some point we had to tell the reader who The Green Goblin really was. And Steve wanted him to turn out to be just some character that we had never seen before. Because, he said, in real life, very often a villain turns out to be somebody that you never knew.

And I felt that that would be wrong. I felt, in a sense, it would be like cheating the reader. It would be like in a murder mystery where you find out, well, it was the butler who did it, or it was the innocent aunt or someone. But if it's somebody you didn't know and had never seen, then what was the point of following all the clues? I think that frustrates the reader. So that was a big argument that we had. And we ended up... I won that one. And not probably because I was any more right than Steve, but because I was the editor. So we made The Green Goblin turn out to be Harry Osborne, who was this millionaire businessman. And of course that led to a

lot more complications, because he had this son who was Peter's best friend, who hated Spider-Man because Spider-Man was the one who had brought his father down. And, as I mentioned, the more complications you get, I think the better the story is.

*After Roy, through Jenna, corrects Stan on a point or two:*

What did I say? [after Roy's response] That's typical. You know, Roy, I don't think it was The Green Goblin. I think we had a—he was a gangster.

There was a gangster in one story. That's who it was! Oh, is that what happened? So, I was right about the—Okay. Good. So, now I gotta say it again. Cuz it was Norman Osborne. Harry is the son, right? [At this point, Stan rephrases his answer in the previous paragraph, replacing "Harry Osborne" with "Norman Osborne."]

*"What about your second character created with Steve Ditko?"*

The two of us? You mean— Oh, I see. Of course, another favorite of mine, which I did with Steve Ditko, was "Doctor Strange." We had done a character some years ago—I think we called him Dr. Droom, or something—who had been a magician. And I always liked him, but I forgot about him. It was a one-shot thing. And one day while we were trying to think of some new heroes, I thought I'd like to bring back a magician. And I gave him the name Doctor Strange—I think Stephen Strange; something like that. And Steve was the fellow who drew it.

I don't think "Doctor Strange" would ever have been as successful if anyone but Steve Ditko had drawn him. Because Steve found a way to draw backgrounds and areas that we made up, like Dream World and all kind of other dimensions. The way Steve drew these places, you really thought you were in a different dimension. And, of course, Steve gave Doctor Strange this great cloak and this amulet that he wore, and everything looked mysterious and magical. And all I had to do was write the



#### Goblin Up Spider-Man

Collector/dealer Mike Burkey, whose art website is [www.romitamania.com](http://www.romitamania.com), no less, supplied us with this never-used version of a Spidey/Green Goblin pencilled page from *Amazing Spider-Man* #40 (Sept. 1966). He says it's "the only existing large art [i.e., twice-up] fully pencilled John Romita ASM page I've ever come across in 20 years of collecting *Amazing Spider-Man* artwork!... The Norman Osborne head was inked partially, and John Romita, as a favor, redrew the Norman Osborne head in pencil on a separate piece of drawing board which fits perfectly over the partially inked Norman Osborne head! What a great guy John Romita is... and what a great piece of art we have here!" "Course, since Mike was selling the page, he could've been excused for exaggerating just a bit—but, in truth, it is a great unused page find. [© 2011 Marvel Characters, Inc.]